

For Immediate Release

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4 million seniors who hit the ‘donut hole’ will begin to receive \$250 checks over the coming months

Washington, D.C.-- Today, Congressman Sires announced that Medicare will start mailing out to tens of thousands of seniors \$250 ‘donut hole’ checks. Under the recently enacted health reform law, seniors who fall in the donut hole coverage gap in 2010 will receive this one-time tax-free \$250 rebate check. The checks will continue to be mailed monthly over the next several months as seniors enter the coverage gap.

“This is the first example of how health care reform law will strengthen Medicare and help seniors,” said Congressman Sires. “Prescription drugs cost many people thousands of dollars a year and this check is a down payment on reducing prescription drug costs for seniors, including the 109,000 in New Jersey who hit the donut hole last year.”

The checks are just the first benefit of health care reform for seniors in the Medicare Prescription Drug program. Beginning in January 2011, seniors in the donut hole will receive a 50% discount on brand name drugs. By 2020, the donut hole will be completely closed.

Medicare recipients will receive the \$250 check automatically once their drug costs for the year hit \$2,830 without the need to fill out any paperwork.

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